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Loudoun County School Board, Minority Student Achievement Advisory Committee (MSAAC) Meeting, Wednesday, February 21, 2024

Date Wednesday, February 21, 2024
Place Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
Length 2h (video)

- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <https://player.vimeo.com/video/915401609?rel=0>
- BoardDocs (School Board): <https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public>

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-21. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:27] 40. Are you ready for the weekend in spring? Yes, yes, yes. Yes, I actually had snowed today, or it snowed last week. I was like, okay, I'm done. I've had enough. I know I didn't snow that much, but I'm done with the temps. Yeah, it's done. Yeah, time for spring.

[00:00:51] Alrighty, we are going to get started. Good evening, everyone, and welcome to the first MSAC general body meeting of 2024. We did not meet in January because I think for the first time in a while, the MSAC meeting fell on a snow day. So we have been working behind the scenes to kind of get everything caught up, get us to a place where we can continue with our schedule and still kind of move things forward. So I'm so happy that you all are here. I'm so happy to see

[00:01:25] you all um we have a great meeting planned for tonight um we um trufelia really took the time to kind of think and plan things through and really came up with a great topic but it also coincides with meetings that the msac executive board has had as well and so to get us started again welcome um i would like to also take a moment to thank my daughter alia for creating the theme, editing, and design of this presentation tonight.

[00:01:56] She worked very hard, so I'm very proud of her. And now she's not going to talk to me for the rest of the night. So I am trying to consolidate the numerous copious amounts of paper that we take home every week.

[00:02:12] Every time we meet, I have multiple copies of QR codes and meeting agendas. And so for tonight, I am going to leave this QR code up for you to sign in for the meeting. Just please scan it. Sign in. If it doesn't work, I'm really sorry. I tried.

[00:02:28] But if it doesn't work, just please email me and let me know you're here tonight and we'll capture your attendance. We are trying to work on finessing everything, trying to modernize and streamline everything. So if it's all just on a QR code or a simple file that you can scan and open up at every meeting, that is my goal.

[00:02:47] So for quick announcements, I have a couple of quick things. We are still in need of an MSAC membership chair, an MSAC membership admin, and an MSAC secretary. Unfortunately, our secretary, Kelly, had to step back.

[00:03:05] She and her husband have taken on new jobs, and so she was not able to continue as secretary. But we are still looking for those three positions. So if you're interested, please email me, especially when it comes to membership and membership admin.

[00:03:20] Those are hefty lists, and those are a lot of work. But I'm looking for someone who wants to work with me to figure out how to streamline the process, make it less typing and less stressful. And so if you're interested, please reach out to me.

[00:03:37] We also would like you to remember that coming up is the MSAC equity. Please, the announcement and save the date is on the website. I don't have it in front of me, And if I exit out of this, we'll never get back in.

[00:03:53] But please just keep it in mind and keep it on your calendar. We're going to be having it at Historic Douglas. And I'm really excited because it's a different location for us. We get to go to one of the historic schools within the division and have our end of year celebration and awards ceremony there.

[00:04:11] And also nominations are open if you know of students, if you know of equity leads, if you know of administrators that have done the work and are moving the needle and are working to make their schools more inclusive and equitable and a safe learning place and environment for our students here in Loudoun County, please nominate them, fill out the form, and let them submit those names.

[00:04:37] And lastly, for my announcements, it's more of a thank you. I would like to thank each and every one of you that showed up the week before last and attended the fiscal year 25 budget meeting. I thank you for speaking up and speaking out and lending your voices.

[00:04:54] I was completely gobsmacked, to use a big word. I was just floored by the number of people in the room lending their voices and speaking up and speaking out in support of the Division of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility. And I believe that you all deserve a round of applause.

[00:05:12] The Division deserves a round of applause as well. Now, before we get started, I would like to acknowledge, 'cause I remembered this time. I would like to acknowledge some special guests in the room. First, I would like to introduce you all to Dr. Rasheed.

[00:05:28] She is our liaison on the school board. I had a great meeting, first meeting with her, and she was pretty fantastic. I am so excited that she is our liaison. We are going to pave a new path, create a relationship that's collaborative and that helps us as an advisory committee to be better, but also just helps us in our advocacy.

[00:05:52] I'm super excited to have her, if you'd like to say a couple words. - Thank you so much for that welcome. And welcome everybody to MSAC. I'm so excited. I can't wait to hear your thoughts and I can't wait to be a part of the future of MSAC and our goals to really expand on what our achievements and what we plan to do for the future.

[00:06:16] And, you know, like, if anybody has any suggestions, Don't hesitate to, you know, come to me or to any of us, rather. You know how to reach us. We have email or we have phone numbers. Again, sometimes we don't reach, we don't respond back in time. But don't think we're not listening. We're always listening, and we're always trying to come up with ways where we can expand on what we want, what we want to further.

[00:06:37] Thanks. Thank you. I also want to take a quick moment and acknowledge Dr. Tyler in the back. Hello, Dr. Tyler. We are very excited for our meeting with you next month.

[00:06:54] Can't wait for that one. I have, we have been planning that meeting and Dr. Tyler is going to have the floor for the evening to really pour into us, train us, help us, encourage us for next month and really prepare us for the next steps in MSAC's future.

[00:07:11] And so I'm very excited for that meeting with Dr. Tyler. So thank you for giving us your time and for training us and working with us next month. I'm just going to say that ahead of time. Thank you very much. and tonight's meeting topic is you are welcome here.

[00:07:33] If it hasn't been said to you, if it hasn't been said to your family members or anyone, let me be the person to say to you, each and every one of you that is in this room and who may be watching on the live streams, you are welcome here. There is a place for you here, you belong here.

[00:07:48] Students, your gifts, your talents, your abilities, your education matters here. We are here to support you in each and every way possible. We encourage you, we lift you up, and I also wanna take a quick moment because this is a big thing.

[00:08:05] If those of you that don't know, we now officially have MSAC student delegates. So if our MSAC student delegates are in the room, please stand so we can welcome you officially, we can give you a round of applause, and thank you for joining us.

[00:08:27] Now, I see you sitting back there in those chairs. Take a table, find a table, join a table. You don't get to sit back there. You get to join us at the tables. I want you, our student delegates, to know that your voice is valued here. Your voice is encouraged here.

[00:08:44] We want to hear from you. We want to hear your thoughts and your opinions. Your experiences in the schools matter to us. And we want you to know that you're most welcome to share that here. We want your contributions. You have a vote. You have a voice.

[00:08:59] We are going to be working for the remainder of the year and into next year to turn our MSAC student delegates into something mighty and powerful. The students that came and spoke at the fiscal year 25 budget, again, you blew me away.

[00:09:15] You were brave and you were courageous. It takes so many guts to stand up and speak up for yourself, especially speaking to people in powerful positions. So again, you are welcome here. We're so excited to have you. I can't wait to get to know each of you better and to work with you, and you guys are going to be the way that we turn MSAC student delegates into what it should be and what it can be.

[00:09:40] So I look forward to working with you guys in the next couple of months. So now, I'm very excited. If you didn't see in January, 'cause it's February, if you didn't see in January and last year, we had our first delegate spotlight, and that was Ms. Robin Scott.

[00:09:56] She's an amazing delegate, and she sent us a video, and she shared her experiences, and tonight I'm very excited for our next delegate spotlight. We have been talking behind the scenes, and I just want you to know that Miss Tonya Bledsoe has some great ideas, and she's gonna share some really powerful insights, and she's also gonna give you a little tidbit of what's to come in the future, but I welcome you to share your experience, to share your knowledge,

[00:10:28] and the floor is all yours, Miss Tonya. - Hello, good evening everyone. Thank you, Erin, for the opportunity to come and speak today.

[00:10:46] And thank you all for showing up today. What I wanted to, when I spoke with Erin, what she wanted me to really talk about was my experience as an MSAC delegate. I believe I've been an MSAC delegate now for over five years.

[00:11:03] Okay, my partner in crime is nodding yes. And so I have a 12-year-old, she's a seventh grader, and she is really excited. She's a smart learner, and we've really had positive interactions here at LCPS.

[00:11:24] I will say that one of the reasons I joined MSAC was to be able to get insight and navigate LCPS. So my child was in private school in her early years, and we had to transition into first grade.

[00:11:42] And thankfully, I was with a bunch of moms who told me about some of the things to watch out for in terms of sometimes administration may ask you questions. Like, for instance, my child was younger than the regular first grader, so they were like, hey, are you sure you don't want her to go back to kindergarten?

[00:12:00] And I'm like, no. She matriculated from a regular kindergarten. she's ready for first grade. And so I wouldn't have known to even speak up or ask questions had I not being in a group of parents. So one of the first things I want to say to everybody is to make sure you have a community. MSAC is a great one, but, you know, make sure you're talking to your neighbors, your friends, you know, about anything that you need to know. Second, as we went through, I was invited to an MSAC meeting and I started coming and just learning about all the opportunities that they were there for our kids.

[00:12:36] One of us was getting into the, at the time, I think it was called EDGE. I could be wrong. EDGE programs. And I had no idea, you know, I think, I assumed that the teachers would recommend certain students into these programs, but no one ever talked to me about it at my school.

[00:12:59] And when I inquired, I think at the time it was too early. And so MSAC did a great presentation on the forms that you had to fill out for gifted students. And I actually took it home. It was a little daunting. But I filled it out, submitted it, and my child has been in the gifted program since that time.

[00:13:21] Once again, I learned that information at MSAC. It wasn't, you know, I didn't have to go search for it. They explained everything that you had to do. They explained the timelines. And so it really made it

easy. So I think after a few years, I became a delegate because what I noticed was I would come to the tables and there was no one from my school at the table.

[00:13:44] So I talked to our principal and we became, my friend and I, we became delegates. We set up meetings. The day after an MSAC meeting, we would go to our principal and share what we learned at MSAC. So that was one of the things that we did to start a communication with that principal.

[00:14:03] I will say, so since then, we've been getting a lot more information that we're able to share out to the community about what's happening within LCPS, good and bad. But the information that we get here, the access to actual LCPS administrators that we get here is one of the things that I like about MSAC.

[00:14:26] So for now, I know I'm going to continue the journey as an MSAC delegate. We only have one more year of middle school. But these are some of the things, even with the school board meeting last week or two weeks ago, we were able to share in my other organizations, hey, this is happening, and we were able to get that word out to make sure that we had people come in.

[00:14:49] I will say, one of the things that I know we're working on for delegates is to have a toolkit, and I think that's something that will be helpful to anybody who's new. But I want to charge everyone, if you know of different schools out there and you're not seeing those delegates show up, to try and see if you can get more of that representation so that we can have more information out to teachers.

[00:15:14] i was at a function a couple weekends ago and it was parents and students and many of the parents we had a conversation had no idea about msac which was kind of sad because i know all the work that we do so the other thing is you know i think we want ideas and how to get the word out there because some of these parents literally said we wanted to change like move to a new location because they didn't know where.

[00:15:44] They were like, where is everybody? Is there on the ground? I'm like, no, there's an MSAC meeting that happens every month and sends out information. So definitely please spread the word, I would say, and share the information that's happening here, and maybe that will also bring people in.

[00:16:03] I think that the last thing is one of the things that I'm also doing because I have the insight and because I actually work in the technology field, is I am working a lot with AI. And so recently, I needed to talk to my teachers.

[00:16:22] I looked in parent view, and the grading book did not look like I should. And so I had a little bit of a panic attack, and then I had a very spirited conversation with my 12-year-old, who was probably like, Mom, I just want to go to sleep.

[00:16:39] But I knew that what I had to do was to, I connected with other teachers, and, you know, they advised me to go to send an email. They also alerted me that teachers were having a hard time keeping the gradebooks up.

[00:16:55] So we were almost halfway into the semester, and the gradebook was just not, you know, representing of the work. So I use AI and crafted very respectful, engaging emails to all my teachers in seconds and sent it out to them.

[00:17:15] And all of them actually responded, and I remembered to copy my counselor. So I copied a counselor who then had a meeting with me and talked about some of the things that we were seeing and understanding and said that she would follow up to make sure the grades were updated.

[00:17:34] So that's one way as a parent I'm utilizing technology to help. This is a big, managing our kids' school career, it can be heavy. And if you have work or the kids, sports and all these activities, you just don't have the time.

[00:17:50] So one of the things that I'm working with Aaron on is to come back and do a workshop of the different tools I use and can be used. You can use AI as a tutor. you're, I know it's hard to, you know, it's expensive in this area for some people. I know they have just released new tools. I am reading all of the things that came out. So they released new tools. But if my child, it seems that she only needs math help at 11 o'clock at night or 10 o'clock at night, right? Lately, I can, you know, take that work, look at it. Now I have, you know,

[00:18:29] somebody to help me with an AI tool to be able to help me with figure out that map problem at night. She's the only child, so I can't look to older brother or sister to say, you know, do this. And my brain is way forgotten much more than that.

[00:18:44] So we'll work on that. And these tools are not just for parents. These tools can be used by teachers. The tools that I have been working and doing workshops with, just as a sneak peek, it helps save administrators about two hours in the day so that they can focus more on what's going on in school. And my opinion, this is just a Tonya Bledsoe opinion, we're going to have to change the way we're teaching and engaging with our students going forward because these tools are out there. You're not going to be able to hide it, but you will be able to say, this is how

[00:19:19] you use it. This is when you use it and encourage them on the right way to use it. And you can use it too. Administration can use it. I know LCPS probably has a whole program, but for anybody who has questions or want to know how I'm using it as a way to save my sanity, definitely you can connect with me. I use QR code, so that's on my phone if anybody wants to contact me, but

[00:19:45] questions or? I'll open the floor to questions. Okay, well, I will be here for the rest of the meeting so thank you for your time thank you Tonya I am I'm really excited for that meeting that meeting is going to happen and that is going to happen in next year for 2024 2025 school year

[00:20:21] because in just a couple of conversations I've had with Tonya she's kind of just little tidbits that she's dropped has helped me to understand you know how to use AI because we're either in the category where we're like, we're terrified, it's not coming anytime soon, or we're like, it's here, what do I do with this stuff? And so I really believe that there's a great space to educate ourselves on AI, to educate ourselves about the technology that we use in schools, the technology that our kids are exposed to, and to help us help them in their education.

[00:20:59] So I'm very grateful that she agreed to work with me in the planning and coming up with what the meeting looks like because I really think she's got so much knowledge that she can help us with, and that's really beneficial to us. So thank you again, Tonya.

[00:21:15] We appreciate you sharing your experience with us, but also we're looking forward to the meeting with you next year. So again, thank you. Now, I am sneaking in a little one because I wasn't sure, but she's here.

[00:21:31] So I would like to just take a moment to welcome Dr. Deans to the podium to come and say hello to us. If you wouldn't mind coming saying hello to us, I'd appreciate it. No, she said no, not today. Well, I would just like to welcome her again.

[00:21:47] I'm looking forward to meeting with her and working with her and sharing her insight. We are so fortunate to have her. Her election is historic in so many ways. and I know that she is going to be a fierce advocate on the school board for every student in this district. And so again, welcome. Thank you for joining us tonight. We can't wait to work with you and we look forward to seeing you often in the future. So thank you again for coming and joining us tonight. And so now we are going to get to while we, hey, technical difficulties.

[00:22:26] Next, I would like to introduce Ms. Jennifer Miller, Supervisor for Strategic Planning and continuous improvement, she's going to share with us creating an instructional framework. Please welcome her.

[00:22:53] Good evening. How are you? Give me a moment to just get this up for you so you can actually see it. And every table also has a few handouts on here that have the majority of the information that I'll be sharing on the slides, as well as some ways towards the end where you can give some of your own feedback.

[00:23:12] So I'm here tonight as one of the facilitators that is leading a design team in the creation of an LCPS instructional framework. This is part of Dr. Spence's entry plan, and frankly, it is a needed piece for the alignment of curriculum and instruction in LCPS.

[00:23:30] It's a big undertaking. We have a wealth of resources here in LCPS, and bringing all of those together in a really cohesive way to explain not only to the teachers and the instructional staff, but also to the public, what are we about instructionally here in LCPS?

[00:23:46] So just wanted to share with you an update of where we are in the process the timing of coming to this meeting in february is really really timely because we are right in the middle of a design team process so i'm able to tell you so far what's been done and a little bit of what's to come and then ways that you can stay engaged with the process as it goes on so we'll jump right in with just talking about what an instructional framework is on the screen you'll see a few bullets that we've shared with lots of people who are involved in the process as well as those who are giving feedback along the way when I'm asked really succinctly how do you describe what an instructional

[00:24:23] framework is it's that first bullet for me you know a shared vision of effective instruction what do we really want to see here in LCPS and how do we all know that we're able to give that to all of our students across the board it is learner-centered it's applicable across all content areas and across all levels so when we speak about an instructional framework we're talking about something that spans the K-12 experience.

[00:24:48] So there is language out there, and I'll show you a few samples in just a little bit, of where other districts have done this work ahead of us to try to align things that make the experience applicable across content and across levels. And then finally, it's a foundational piece that drives daily instruction and assessment practices.

[00:25:06] So assessment being one of the core pieces that we know is involved in teacher planning, how do we bring that to the forefront and make it a true instructional practice in itself? So, these are some key questions that we pose to the design team right from the beginning. Our instructional design team is made up of about 35, 36 members that are a mix of both representatives from content, from central office departments, and school-based personnel.

[00:25:32] Out of those 35 people, 20 are straight out of a school-based position, and so that voice on that committee is really important. And we pose some of these questions just to get started with them, and really at the heart of it is that first one. What do we believe about learning in LCPS? Here are some of the benefits of an instructional framework. We've learned from colleagues who have done this work ahead of us in other districts. So I'll give you a moment just to read the things that are on the screen there,

[00:25:58] and then I'll highlight a few keywords.

[00:26:19] When I look over some of these statements, some of the big things that stand out for me are words like consistency, student outcomes, common language, and transparency, and there are many others. So I'll speak to some of those as we go through the process that we've already started so far this year. This is really a team effort. I am here as a representative of what's more of the project management team that you see on this screen.

[00:26:44] There is also a design team that I'll speak of a lot this evening because that's the current phase that we are in. And then there is an advisory team who will help take some of those recommendations from the design team and make some decisions moving forward. On the side of the screen you see input and feedback, synthesizing and iterating and guiding and aligning are really the things that all three of those groups are charged with. Input and feedback is also a chance for us to come out and visit with various stakeholder groups and have them give feedback at wherever we are in the process. So I'm going to share a little bit tonight about where we are in hopes that you too will give

[00:27:21] some input to inform our next steps. This is really small on the screen so I'll highlight just a few things. We have presented this to the design team as this is a project that will take longer than just what the design team is capable of doing. And we start that project by anchoring ourselves in the vision that LCPS has already established in our strategic plan. And we're moving now into what will the key components of an instructional framework look like? And so tonight, some of the questions that I'm going to bring to you are really related to that second one, key components.

[00:27:53] What are the broad characteristics that should be present in all classrooms? And our hope is that then this will move us to the next step of indicators. What specific areas require articulation, emphasis, and what could this really look like as we play it out in the classroom?

[00:28:10] The last two steps are more of descriptors and progressions, and these are a little bit more of the tools. What tools will be created for our instructional staff to help put this into action? You also have this on your handout. So this is our project page. We're very happy of this site, and in hopes that you will stay engaged with us, we encourage you to visit this page, to bookmark this page, and come back to it often. Just about all of the information that's shared here with you tonight is captured on this page, which means we encourage you to share it with others. Just because I'm standing here in front of you tonight does not mean that this is a message just for the people in this room,

[00:28:49] and so hopefully you'll share this project page with those in your network as well. And I'm going to point out a few things that you can find there. One are some samples that we're drawing from. There are a lot of districts across the nation who have already done this work in creating an instructional framework. A few of them that stood out to us, both in imagery and in some of the resources that they have behind their framework, are the ones that you see on the screen. A few of them are Virginia schools, several of them are not. And we are pulling out some examples of what do we think we want to help influence the creation of ours. This is in no way to say that we are

[00:29:26] going to create a copy of any of these, or we're taking one of these and just putting some Loudoun language on it. What we're doing is using it as an inspiration to say, what speaks to us in any of these? What's really particularly helpful in communicating our vision to the public, to teachers, and what are the things that hold these words up? You see a lot of words in these examples, but what's behind it? And that's really where the design team is spending some of their time right now. So you are welcome on the website. You can click into these and see what other districts are doing around the United States in regards to their own instructional frameworks. Some call them by slightly different names, learning models, teaching and learning frameworks. All of those are

[00:30:04] things that we've considered when we've looked at our design of our own. This is just an overview of the process. And if you notice, on number one, it says January through July. So we are on number one. We're still very much in the first stages of this, and that's building that foundation.

[00:30:22] What do we want those key components to look like? What do we already know about our mission and vision in LCPS and what do we need to make sure that we hold on to and still leave some space to push us forward. We know that the learners in our rooms are constantly changing in our classrooms and we want to make sure that we design an instructional framework that speaks to every learner that we have K-12. If you look a little forward in the plan you'll see that really next school year is focused on aligning our resources. Something that will be simultaneously happening when the creation of the instructional framework is happening is a curriculum audit. That is another piece that we'll start here shortly. And so hand in hand, taking a really hard look at our curriculum

[00:31:00] and in the instructional practices that we value, we hope to bring those two together in a really strategic way. And then as we move into next year, professional learning for our instructional staff will go along with that. Really the communication planning is all along, but there will be a huge focus on how do we want to image this and how do we want to put this forward in the 2024 and 2025 school year. And then implementation and monitoring would come after that.

[00:31:29] Ongoing engagement, being here tonight is one of the opportunities that we're doing. When I show you the survey in just a moment, you'll see that there are various groups that we are visiting and in hopes that they will give us some of this very same feedback. We're gathering it from groups both internal and external and hope and encourage you to share that with anyone that's in your network as well.

[00:31:48] You can see that there's a few groups that are particularly named on the slide. We have some principal groups that have some structures we can already tap into. we have teacher groups one of those groups is meeting tomorrow for the superintendent's advisory committee and that'll be a room of about a hundred teachers who are going to interact with some of the stages we're in in the design phase we have a student group who will also be doing some work with this in March and then the community is ongoing most of those meetings that you see outlined on the slide are happening in the month of February so that we're still very much in an input stage and we hope to continue processes like this in the future so that we can put something forth for people to also react to so

[00:32:25] So we're very much in the creation phase now and we also want to be in the critique and revision phase and get feedback there too. This is a very busy slide and this is an example of what the feedback looks like when it comes in. So this is a visual representation of just one group that we did some of this design team work with and gathered some feedback from a survey and using some tools, what were the words that started to come out as far as what we value around instruction in LCPS.

[00:32:55] So I'll take you a moment just to kind of digest that and see some of the big things. Of course, the words that are standing out are the words that showed up the most.

[00:33:14] If you're interested to see how we get to some of these points in our conversations, on that project page at the very bottom, there are some tabs that you can click into.

[00:33:30] And you can actually see an outline and some highlights of what was done at design session one, which was at the end of January, and design session two, which was at the beginning of February. And our very next design session meeting is at the end of next week. So we're looking forward to keeping you updated on the progress of how we're doing.

[00:33:49] So finally, some opportunity for some data collection. These are the three big questions that we've been kind of taking on the road. They're the same three big questions that we started with the design team and really thinking about what do we believe? What are those characteristics of great instruction? How do you know when great instruction is happening?

[00:34:07] And then what are some elements of high-quality teaching that you would like to see happening more often or more effectively in schools across LCPS? So this is really an opportunity for you to give some of your own feedback here. And again, to share that, this QR code is also on the handout that you have, and there's some extras in the back.

[00:34:26] So if you would like to take some time and think about it, we appreciate your input whenever you have the time to dedicate to it. This is a quick bit.ly link that will take you right there. So for those of you that are more note-takers like I am, sometimes it's helpful to remember it as LCPSIF, which is Instructional Framework Feedback.

[00:34:45] I'll pause there and let you take a picture if you'd like. We really do appreciate your feedback. Every time the design group comes together, we take a look at all the new information that has come in on these surveys, and it is very, very helpful to continue to gather information on these three key questions and making sure that we're staying true and being able to answer these at the end of our work.

[00:35:10] I'll leave that up there for a few minutes and just open it up. What questions might you have about any of the information that I've shared or how to keep up to date on the project. Thank you so much for the presentation. So it sounds like we don't have anything like this in place right now. So is there something else guiding how instruction happens today? Oh yes. We actually have a lot of things in place and that's one of the reasons for doing this as a more centralized process with the instructional framework. We are pulling from tons

[00:35:44] of resources. So there has been a lot of work done both in central office and by schools to try to create this alignment of what do we believe in LCPS. We are very rich in resources here and as we continue to grow, we haven't always brought those things back into a really central message that people can say, what are you about? It's not a quick answer with some of the resources that we have right now. So our design team is drawing upon our existing resources to bring in some of that and we also don't want to ignore that this is an opportunity to really ask that question of what could we be doing better? You know, what could we be doing more effectively that might be missing

[00:36:22] from some of our past resources? Just one more question. So it seems a call to action is to provide feedback via this and you are looking for it from parents in addition to those other audiences. And is there a deadline when they have to have that feedback in? Feedback is going to be ongoing for this

process because the questions are so broad. And when we know that some of those answers are coming from different stakeholder groups, we're able to think about this in different design processes.

[00:36:48] So for example, when we get to the end of this first phase with a design team, we hope to just have some really clear key components. And so with putting that out on the project page, we expect that the feedback might look a little different. I saw that you have this. This is what that means to me.

[00:37:04] This is how it relates to this question on great instruction. So we're hoping that the feedback might even morph and refine as we get more and more information provided to everybody. Okay. Thank you. Thank you.

[00:37:27] Yes. so much. Her question was about can you share it out? Absolutely you can. We'll continue to put other opportunities on that project page too and in general there is a let's talk button at the bottom so if there is a specific question that you have that you would like addressed about the process or around any of the information that you see we encourage you to use let's talk as well.

[00:37:51] So a while back back in 2020 there was an exercise to put together a LCPS culturally responsive framework. Is that still in existence? Absolutely. Okay and that directly links to this activities. Yes, and members of that team are also part of the design team. Okay, thank you. That is actually a perfect example of her question. We have a lot of existing resources out there that are so rich in their information. How do we bring that all together for teachers and for public so that feels usable and it feels matched to the message that we want to put out there? Thank you. I had the pleasure of being on that design team too, and it was a wonderful process. Other questions? Yes.

[00:38:31] I have a question about the previous slide. Do the responses on those three questions, do they inform this graphic here? Yeah. This is a sample of the responses from a single group responding to those.

[00:38:47] So we could probably produce about 12, 13, 14 of these slides by now with the amount of data that we have in responses to that. This is some early ones that have been done by our design team, and then we continue to bring back the actual data and the survey results to the team for full analysis.

[00:39:03] Okay. And is there any significance to the coloring, the size of the... Size does indicate that it showed up multiple times. Multiple times. With higher frequency. Okay. Thank you. Yes.

[00:39:20] Thank you. And I just had a question about the student group. Does that cover from K through 12? So the current student group that we will be engaging in this early stage is the super attendance advisory committee which comes to this building and is representative at the high school level they are also charged with gathering some information from their feeder schools so we're going to give them some suggestions of how to do that and then once we have a more finalized product we could consider how might we might take that to some of our younger learners right now they would be looking at kind of some similar data and things that you all are looking at tonight so we're going

[00:39:55] going to start with that advisory committee and they meet in March. Yes, it is. Okay. I just had a question about related to the student groups as well. Um, and really the groups in general, is there any effort to make sure that the groups or the people being polled are representative of our community? Like, are we making sure for instance, that the student groups don't all look the same or have the same demographics, but that we're accounting for the opinions of the entire community? I mean, I think that is something we need to consider moving forward. The only

[00:40:34] student group that we currently have on the calendar is the one that I mentioned to you right now. After the design group, a design team, I need to use the correct terminology, after the design team concludes, after that we enter an entirely different phase of this. So putting something out around key components and indicators, that's going to need feedback from various stakeholder groups. And we want to make sure that anyone can engage in that.

[00:40:57] We have not worked out what exactly that will look like. If it were up to me, there's a focus group approach that seems to work really well, and that would really lead to some of the things that you're talking about. And I would love to partner in a way to do that so that we can ensure maybe that happens through some structures that we already have in place.

[00:41:16] Thank you. All right. So the QR code will stay there. Please take a handout with you. If you do have any questions, we encourage you to visit that project page. Yes? Do you have one more? Of course. It left my mind for a second.

[00:41:33] So this, I saw that one of the groups that you have is principals, but how is this within the schools to be able to get it out to parents in those schools, to be able to get it out to, you know, the PTOs, what have, because I don't know that any of, like, if I wasn't here, is this the only place that, you know, we can find out about this?

[00:41:55] Sure. And we are in the very early stages. So we went to the principals meeting a few weeks ago. They have also not had a chance to be learners in this space, and that's one of the things that I'm saying is to groups, this is our opportunity to be informed, and then we all get a learning year around this.

[00:42:13] So what do we want to do in the 2024-2025 school year to all engage in the process? And that will be where we hopefully start seeing things come out to the public a little bit more. I don't want to speak for any principals that are on that group, but we do have several members on their design team who will be doing that.

[00:42:30] And some of them have requested just some one-on-one kind of talking around the communications plan and how they could be partners in that work. Thank you. Can you also please provide an electronic copy or digital copy of the handout from today?

[00:42:46] The handout has everything that's on the exact same project page. So all of those images are produced from there. But I'd be happy to share the exact handout with the committee so that you can link it to your agenda. Thank you. Sure. Am I over time? Okay. Thank you so much for your time.

[00:43:02] It was a pleasure to be in front of you all today. Okay, so next up I am going to turn the floor over to Mr. Shahid Muhammad and the Division of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility for an update and presentation to us.

[00:43:27] So please welcome them. Thank you.

[00:43:50] Good evening everyone. We're going to get set up with our slideshow presentation.

[00:44:19] Thank you Mrs. Kunkel for the introduction. I am Shahid Muhammad. I'm one of the supervisors in the Division of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility. I'm here with some of my colleagues, and I'll introduce you, Laura Freeman, who is one of our instructional facilitators, Michelle Frasina, who is also an instructional facilitator, Cynthia Lewis, who is the other supervisor in DEIA, and Jess Heitfield, our specialist.

[00:44:52] And we're here to give an overview of the scope of work that we're doing right now in DEIA. But I first want to just say on behalf of Dr. Leticia Ellis Williams, who couldn't be here this evening due to a prior commitment, we want to give a heartfelt thanks to MSAC and your ongoing support of the work that we're doing for LCPS for all students. And we just want to really thank you. We are very appreciative, especially with the public comments and just the support, the ongoing support that you provide. So thank you very much. So we're going to start off with

[00:45:31] just some working definitions that we currently have for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. We think that's important for you to kind of understand some of the guiding information along with our LCPS commitment to equity that kind of undergirds and guides our work. And I'm going to read them to you. Hope you don't mind. First, diversity is all the ways that people are different and the same at the individual and group levels. Even when people appear the same, they are different. Organizational diversity requires examining and questioning the

[00:46:09] makeup of a group to ensure that multiple perspectives are represented. Equity is the fair and just treatment of all members of a community. Equity requires commitment to strategic priorities, resources, respect, and civility, as well as an ongoing action and assessment of progress toward achieving specific and common goals. Inclusion refers to the intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that all persons fully participate in all aspects of organizational work,

[00:46:49] including decision-making processes. It also refers to the ways that all persons are valued and respected, are valued as respected members of an organization and or community. And accessibility.

[00:47:06] Accessibility is giving equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience. Accessibility encompasses the broader meanings of compliance and refers to how organizations make space for the characteristics that each person brings.

[00:47:22] And so we talk about these definitions because they're very important in understanding the functions of our division and the work that we do. These working definitions are flexible, and it really depends on the types of supports and needs that students and staff members and community members and families need in order to fully engage in the most successful educational experience possible.

[00:47:52] And so I wanted to make sure that we touched on those. If you are at a table, because we would like you to do a little bit of talking, we don't want to just re-talk to you. If you are alone at a table, if you would please join another table as we want to help have you engage in some table talk.

[00:48:11] So a question that we have for you is that in your work as an MSAC delegate, which of the four concepts do you feel most strongly about and why? And we'll go back so that you can see them.

[00:48:27] We'll kind of cycle through them. But in your role as an MSAC delegate, which of the four or multiple definitions of work resonate most with you? Take about three or four minutes, and then we'll share out.

[00:50:32] Okay, we're going to come back together in one minute.

[00:52:23] One minute.

[00:53:28] All right, if we could come back together, and would anyone like to share out anything that they heard or like to share any information? Yes. I think, of course, they're all important, but if I had to rank it, I would say maybe I would start with inclusion.

[00:53:50] You know, if you at least feel included, welcome, part of, you would be more open to, that whole group would be more open to hearing the opinions and thoughts of others. And if a kid feels included and welcome, they're more likely to really be the true self that they are and share the different thoughts and personal, you know, their real personality.

[00:54:16] And so they're just trying to fit into the group. Thank you for sharing that. And there are no right or wrong answers, and we definitely feel like that inclusion is a component that is necessary for all students to feel like they belong and are valued so they can be their best selves.

[00:54:35] So we appreciate that. Any other comments? Yes. Okay, I said for me, honestly, like all four of them, coming from the private school sector into public school, like my son has experienced issues with all four areas.

[00:54:59] So me joining MSAC and the work that we do here, I feel like there's a little bit of everything that kind of leads into the other one. So you kind of can't have one without the other. And so for me, it's all of them.

[00:55:14] I feel like they are all important and, you know, the kids need to feel all of them and understand all of them and what that looks like. Thank you. Yes.

[00:55:34] So, our table talked about how our word was equity, and we felt that it was equity because equity is the vehicle to kind of creating just and, like, transformative communities, and it's more of a lens to think about everything instead of just a thing that is happening.

[00:55:50] So, it's active, it's a verb, and it's something that you're able to work towards or strive towards. Awesome. Thank you for sharing. So, now we're going to talk a little bit about our work with our equity leads.

[00:56:08] Hi, everybody. Nice to be with you tonight. So our equity lead program, we have an equity lead at every school in the county. So that's all elementary schools, all middle schools, and all high schools.

[00:56:24] There's typically one to two, and it's usually a teacher, but it can also be a counselor. And their primary goal is to work with the principal to support equitable outcomes at their schools. So my task really here is to walk you through what a day in the life of an equity lead can really look like.

[00:56:41] and I'm drawing on my experiences here as the equity lead at Parkview, which is a role I had before I came into this job. Michelle Fristina, my colleague, was also an equity lead at an elementary school. And so in our conversations, we know that it's going to look different from school to school because every school has different needs, every school has a different community.

[00:57:03] So I'm just going to take you through some of the things. So first of all, we sort of consider the principal at each school as the real equity lead. They're the ones who are determining the priorities of the school, the goals, what the needs are, and they are really connected with their community.

[00:57:22] And the equity lead is leading the charge and supporting all of those things. So just to get through this day, I chose a day in March. So my principal and I had focused in on every faculty meeting, we were going to present some learning that was needed to our staff.

[00:57:44] And so at this particular meeting, Ramadan was coming up. We had several students who had expressed to our principal a need for a space to pray. And also just, you know, we knew that there was a need to really understand the needs of kids at that time.

[00:58:01] So I worked with the Muslim Student Association and a couple of Muslim teachers in order to really think about, like, how do we share? It's not just about fasting, it's also all these other things. And so the students helped me find a video to share.

[00:58:18] And then as a staff, we watched the video, and then we brainstormed ways that we can support kids. So, for example, thinking about our test dates and, you know.

[00:58:33] So maybe thinking about what are those kids going to need to thrive, and then we just all contributed to that, and it became a goal of ours to really make sure each kid was supported. One of the things that I made sure that I could do as an equity lead was be accessible to all of the staff who needed me, and also the students.

[00:58:54] So one of the things that I would do is make sure that on my planning blocks, I was posted up in the library because that was a place where both teachers and students came when they needed support. And so they knew I was there if they needed to bring up anything that was a concern to them or if they had any ideas about ways that we could be doing a better job, they would come to me and then I would take those to our equity community.

[00:59:19] We would talk about those things or I would take them directly to the principal if I thought that there was something that was an urgent need. So it was that open line of communication with the students and the staff. The bottom three pictures on this slide are really near and dear to my heart because one thing that you may not know about equity leads is that that's an additional duty and we're full-time teachers, counselors, whatever it is that we're doing what our regular job is.

[00:59:44] So I was a reading specialist and a newcomer EL teacher. And so the contact that I had with kids every single day informed my work. If they were concerned about something or they were showing that there was a particular need that wasn't being met, that was really important.

[01:00:05] And so my students really informed the work. The middle picture up there are of the two student equity ambassadors that I had the pleasure of working with. So that's Anaya and Layla. And when we were looking for student equity ambassadors, where usually the equity lead is often the liaison for them, we had such an outpouring of students who wanted to be in that role.

[01:00:34] And there's a limit two to three for each school. And so what the kids asked was, can we make place for all of us? And so we created the student equity advisory committee. And so all of the students who wanted to be a part of that, and that group grew as well.

[01:00:52] So a couple of the things that our student equity ambassadors did were, for one thing, the students were amazing, and they would often come to the staff equity committee meetings and share their perspectives. That was really, really important for them.

[01:01:08] The other thing that they did was they were leaders in that student equity advisory committee group. And so sometimes that looked like teaching one another about themselves or about particular things they were interested in, but it was also a place for student advocacy and growth.

[01:01:24] And so I'm sure you all are familiar with the Parkview Redo, and the conversations for that really began in that meeting space. So it was my job to also not just make sure that kids were getting what they need, but also make sure that they had a voice and that it was listened to.

[01:01:43] So, again, that's just a snapshot, and it is really going to be different for each school. So we want to give you another opportunity to talk and give you an opportunity to also ask any questions that you have about the Equity Lead Program.

[01:02:02] Yes. Thank you for explaining more about the Equity Lead Program. So do Equity Leads actively pursue or reach out to MSAC delegates, or do you have regular meetings with MSAC delegates at your school?

[01:02:24] No, not as a regular thing, but I think it would be a good idea. Shahid, did you have more information about that? We believe that there are equity leads that do reach out and have conversations with delegates. I don't know how pervasive it is throughout the school division.

[01:02:43] That is something that we would like to have more of and help to be able to facilitate those things. So I think it's a school-by-school case, but that is something that we feel would be very important for equity leads and MSAC delegates to have conversations and discuss things and share information that's important from the community standpoint.

[01:03:07] I just would also add that we have some equity leads that are regular members of this committee and attend monthly with their school administrators and their school community, so equity leads are prevalent in the community and really working with MSAC in that way as well.

[01:03:23] Do you think we have good words? I just wanted to chime in and say that as an MSAC delegate, you are encouraged and empowered to seek out the equity lead at your school. At my school, Round Hill, the first thing I did was say, do we have an equity lead?

[01:03:43] Who is that? And then within 24 hours, I had an inundation of emails from the entire equity staff within the school. But please know that you can go out and just ask your principal or ask at the front desk, do you have the information as to who the equity lead is at your school?

[01:04:01] Feel empowered to do that because it's a great relationship to build. because if you don't have a co-delegate, that's your partner in the school. That's someone that you can work with. You can take information back. You can ask them how you as an MSAC delegate can support them. And it is highly encouraged. I encourage you to pursue that relationship. It has so many benefits and you learn so much. Like I've learned so much from our equity lead at Round Hill because she's amazing and she's pretty fearless, even though she would say she's not, but she's really fearless and she really does dive into the work and she provides me with really

[01:04:41] great feedback that I can even take back to the PTO and share when we have the opportunity to talk. So my son is in eighth grade. I have been an MSAC delegate at his middle school since he started middle school there. I have never had a meeting with the equity lead. I do have the first meeting this Friday, and that's only as a result of an incident that my son experienced. And this

[01:05:15] is the second incident. After the first incident, I did send an email asking, frankly, if I could help find a way to kind of minimize some of these incidents. I never really got a response, And I couldn't even find who the equity lead for my school was.

[01:05:39] I actually went through MSAC's information to find that. It's nowhere on our school website. So just putting that out there. So the equity lead list is on the website. It's on the page for DEIA, and there is, on that page, there is a link on the side that says equity lead in principle.

[01:06:02] so it is there but it's not like on a the main page yeah i so i'm sorry so i mean erin did a good job telling us that we needed to do this like she gave us the talking points and the email but when those at least when our email went out like no one actually responded to us yeah and so my concern is once again we have great information we have great intentions but the execution i mean And if you look in the room, most of the schools don't even have delegates.

[01:06:38] So if they're not here to hear this, we wouldn't even think to go to the DI page to look for that equity lead. So I hear that, you know, there's so many, they come to the meetings. But if you take every school, how many equity leads that are engaged in those meetings that you are reporting out?

[01:06:57] And is there a charge for those equity leads to reach out to their delegates? Make sure their school have, that's the first thing they can help us with, make sure that there's parents or you know involved because as a parent I can't even get information to parents without going to the PTO and if there's only five members of the PTO I'm in this so since they're in the building and may have access that I don't have it would be good aid to identify them on the school's page second they can help us the delegates get to parents and get the information out so just you know that's really good feedback and it's really great ideas

[01:07:35] um so well it's actually to piggyback off what she said um so do you think that if there was a link of some sort on the main lcps website for the equity leads it would be helpful yes that would be helpful but if i start i would go to my school's website okay so there's you know social studies teacher you know tell me who the equity lead is at that school from my school's website okay okay

[01:08:01] thank you not currently yeah we have they're not exactly monthly but they're close to monthly meetings and so yeah there's time and then we also have an orientation at the beginning of the year

[01:08:39] so there is definitely collaboration even though it's going to be different different levels different schools then we had a question over here I just want to piggyback on what Tonya said but frame it as a request would the office of DEIA make it I'm sorry I can't hear you very well speaking to it so I just want to piggyback on what Tonya said and frame it as a request would the office consider having one of the responsibilities of the equity leads be to engage with your MSAC delegates? I'm going to pass that off to Shahid and Cynthia.

[01:09:12] I think, so this is the fourth year that we've had equity leads in the division, and the role is also consistently evolving, and I think this type of feedback and other information that we're learning will be utilized in actually the roles and responsibilities of our equity leads moving forward. So yes, that's not a hard ask in terms of the communication piece, because we do want to make sure that our equity leads are having the ability to communicate early and often with different stakeholders. One of the things that I think is also important is that our equity leads

[01:09:52] sometimes are working under the direction of a school principal, and we need to make sure that our school principals are also aware of issues that sometimes our equity leads are then deployed to help support a problem. But keep in mind that equity leads are not full-time positions.

[01:10:12] They do have other counselors, their social workers, their psychologists. They have various roles. And so their time during the day may be impacted in order to be able to have conversations and meetings with delegates however this is something that we will be looking at and kind of problem solving through because it is a it is important good evening i think relationships

[01:10:45] is one of the things that we might want to tighten up and one of those relationships might be the association of msac with the equity committee and the first meeting of the equity committee is march The first meeting of the Equity Committee is March 7th, which is on a Thursday, here in the same room.

[01:11:08] And I think that if the different committees and the different parent groups and the different advocates were to form closer relationships and alliances, then we might get an improved communication among the groups who have common needs and common interests.

[01:11:31] Great. So I'll take it one step further. So you mentioned that each school has their equity committees. So those have been in existence, some before there were equity leads, but in the past when MSAC had asked if they could have delegates who participated in those meetings, those requests were denied. I think in some instances for privacy reasons, and I totally understand and get that, but perhaps there could be some sort of quarterly, twice a year type of meeting that the schools

[01:12:09] could host with equity leads, with a MSAC delegate, and other parents in the schools about these topics that, you know, you shared what was happening at your school and the information like that. Oh my gosh, I would have loved to have seen that type of presentation at my specific school about whatever issues are highlighting and the things that are being resolved. We could have had way more than 40 people last week. It would have been 140 because we would have been informed on what is actually happening in our school not just LCPS but our individual school and I think

[01:12:46] it's great that these ideas are coming out and there's a lot of opportunities for collaboration and so keep that in mind as you're going through doing your work as well yeah I would add to that that that collaboration there's so much value in it and to not have work happening in one place for msac and in another place for equity leads and streamlining that can only be good as where we as we've redefined our division this year and kind of reconnected and are redefining our collaboration with msac which is going so well i think that these are good conversations to be

[01:13:23] having about how the msac delegates and equity leads will then merge their collaboration um off of Shahid's point as well I also want to say that speaking up about the incidents that are happening and needing to kind of reach out to different areas in order to be heard that we're hearing that as well and that we're working towards not having those barriers in place and I would just say I know we're talking about collaboration and relationship building if you don't know or haven't

[01:14:03] met your equity lead at your school you know I would challenge any MSAC delegate to you know go home you know send an email to your principal and you know go to the DIA website look up your equity lead send them and your principal an email and say I'd like to schedule some time to meet with you if they don't respond follow up and send an email and until you get a response and set schedule some time and start that relationship, have that conversation. Like Mrs. Bledsoe said, you know, that's what I do. I've been doing it at my school and it wasn't always a quick response.

[01:14:41] It wasn't always an easy relationship, but over time, you know, that mutual respect and for what we're trying to do together for our kids was established. And so that is what, you know, I think is our ultimate goal you know hopefully what we're trying to do so I would challenge you know all of our MSAC delegates to you know if you haven't established that relationship with your equity lead and your principal to do that and just adding to that point I'm an equity lead I

[01:15:16] am a teacher and I just want to emphasize like reach out to us proactively like as you join our school communities as your student goes to the next grade level reach out to us because we care about your children deeply. This is a group of parents who I care about deeply, and it's because we built a relationship of positive rapport and our shared goals for the kids. So the sooner that you reach out to us, the sooner you start building that relationship, the more that we are able to help you navigate a variety of things, both positive and challenges that we need to work through together. So please know that we're here for the good stuff, just like we are here

[01:15:53] for the challenges too. Thank you so much for that. That's very important. All right, so I'm going to pass it off to Michelle for family engagement. Hello everyone. So talking about family engagement is something that puts a smile on my face every time I get to do it and it's something I just have a strong passion about and I love talking about it. I also feel like this is a great segue because we're really talking about the strength and the importance of relationships

[01:16:30] and that really is to me the heart about family engagement. And I want to start out just mentioning the family engagement workgroup. So as I work for the division of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility, I'm a member of this family engagement workgroup. What's important to understand is that this workgroup, we do not have a separate division, department or office that's solely devoted to family engagement. Family engagement lives in different areas within LCPS. So we come together in the workgroup from student services, from our division of

[01:17:05] VEL, from DEIA, we have like a core group of eight people, and we come together, usually it's every other week, sometimes it's more often, to really talk about family engagement. It actually started with a grant three years ago.

[01:17:21] So we were provided a grant to work on family engagement, and after the grant ended, after a year, the people in this work group thought, we just can't end this work because a grant ended. We're doing really good work. This is really important. And at the same time last year, our strategic plan was rolling out, which I'll talk about in a little bit more, that really highlights in 4.1, specifically calls out family engagement.

[01:17:46] So we decided as a group that we're going to continue this work group. So I really want to highlight to you today the work that this work group is doing and what we're doing as a division to support family engagement. So I'd like to start out in understanding the why, because people a lot of times will say well family engagement that's just a really nice thing to do like we need to have family engagement it's a nice thing to do it's actually a lot more than just a nice thing to do so we know that research really tells us when we have really strong relationships with our families and really strong family engagement that supports student outcomes attendance and it really builds

[01:18:24] that school home relationship for schools it brings out stronger school morale, reduced teacher turnover, and reduced and improved job satisfactions. So what I really like to bring out is if you think about a goal a teacher might have, a goal a school might have, a goal a principal might have, a goal a family might have, a student might have. There really isn't a goal that you can come up with where family engagement is not going to support that

[01:18:56] goal. So we have started with family engagement. Oh gosh, this is my third year. So three years ago, we rolled out family engagement learning for the entire division. And in there, within our research from Karen Mack, we have these four core beliefs. And these really have become like the cornerstone of

LCBS's belief in terms of family engagement. And this is really when I approach this with faculty and staff. These are really the beliefs we really want people to hold onto. And one is the understanding that all families have dreams for their children and

[01:19:36] want the best for them. We need to believe that. The second one, all families have the capacity to support their children's learning. This is the one a lot of times where I might get a lot of pushback on, and I like to tell my personal story around this. So as a first-generation college graduate, my parents were never going to set foot in my school, never. Like that was just not something that was going to happen. They were not able to help me with my homework beyond really elementary school, but I'll tell you what, every day I was on that bus, I came home, my parents made

[01:20:12] certain my homework was completed to the best of my ability and they told me how important education was and how important college was. So the way my parents supported my education was never going to be visible to the school. Like I was one of those kids where the teacher probably said well those parents don't care about their education because we never see them. We never hear from those parents but that support that my parents had was there. Families and staff are equal partners. We need to be looking at families and schools that equal partners in this work. The responsibility for

[01:20:47] cultivating and sustaining those partnerships begins with the schools in the leadership. So as the schools and the leadership in those schools, we need to take the lead in bringing families into our buildings, being out in our communities to engage our families. And what really connects me to these four beliefs, that when you look at them, it really looks at family engagement through that asset-based approach.

[01:21:13] This is what families can bring to our schools, to our students' education, and what schools are bringing to their families. So I talked a little bit about the strategic plan, and I just really want to highlight that this work is really embedded in the mission and core values of our strategic plan, and especially 4.1, that really highlights family engagement.

[01:21:37] And so we're looking at those strategies of the listening structures, best practices are English language learners and welcoming new families. I'm going to show you on the next slide some of the work that we have been doing to really support the strategic plan. So as a family engagement work group, we've come together and really created some resources for our schools.

[01:21:57] So the first thing that we did is we created a rubric so schools can look at that and be like, when we think about family engagement, where are we on this rubric? Where are our growth areas? Where do we need to grow? And then we've had these family engagement best practices. So if I need to grow in this area, what are the best practices that can really help us as a school to get there?

[01:22:19] We have resources that really highlight all the division supports within LCPS. So if a teacher is saying, well, I really need language services for a family, this resource can help you to get there. The last one that we did that I'm really excited about is a guide for front office staff.

[01:22:37] We often feel, I know when I walk into a school, we say, like, the front office staff is a smile and a handshake of the school. When you walk in, they're the first people to greet our new families, to greet our students. So we put together a guide to really help support our front office staff with engaging and bringing new families into LCPS and into their schools.

[01:22:59] We are now working on our professional learning around this welcome guide that we'll be putting out. Hopefully, we'll have all of this learning provided to our schools by the start of the next school year.

[01:23:18] So I want to give you some time to be thinking about this question. How does the Elevation to Family Engagement Practices serve the MSAC focus? and I'm also here to answer any questions you may have about what I talked about and about family engagement in general. So you can take a few moments with your tables, think about this

[01:23:42] question, and then we can share out and come back for some questions.

[01:25:03] I'm hearing a little bit of a lull. Do we have anybody that would like to share out? And then after we share out, I'm happy to answer any questions you might have. I think the first kind of post-it that you had up there that every parent you know has a dream that they want they're the best for their

[01:25:39] children that you know and along with that the relationship building and as we were discussing in our group that that going together with relationship building getting parents involved building the community and other people has shared that you know they learned more from from talking to other parents you're like oh I didn't know that so if you have the opportunity to engage more with others ensure more it's better for everyone yeah I mean I think two things that you had said is that coming in with that understanding that every parent has

[01:26:16] dreams and hopes for their children and I'll bring that back to the working group of how can we create more space for parents to have more engagement with each other yeah thank you anybody else so other than at the PTA PTSO meetings is there a way for MSAC delegates to reach out to parents at the school yeah

[01:26:53] I mean I think that in thinking about that it would be a school-by-school basis and that relationship you have with your principal and where are the spaces where you can connect with other parents so is it where you know they might have parent outside of their PTO or their other parent events where you might be able to have a voice in. So I think that's on like a school to school basis as what schools have and where are those spaces where you can, where MSAC delegates can come and be part of. And I really need to put some more thought about that because I think that's a really, really great idea that we

[01:27:32] need to have that building of more and stronger relationships. Any questions about family engagement?

[01:28:00] So how would we as parents recognize that principals and others within the school district or school system are actually using the tools that you referred to, like the rubric and other things? How are you measuring the evidence of use of those activities? Because yeah, I, and that honestly, that's something we are in the middle of doing right now. We put together we're creating a new form with our with our research development team so we could actually have schools providing us that feedback so which of these tools have you used how effective have

[01:28:38] they been and we presented on our resources to principals to aspiring principals to our equity leads I mean we've been out we've been out in spaces throughout the division to make certain and that people are really aware of these resources and the tools that are there.

[01:28:56] But that is something that we are currently working on, is getting together a type of survey so we can get that data and feedback back. Great question. Okay, so I'm going to now pass it over to our DEI division updates.

[01:29:22] Okay, so I think at the beginning of the year, I can't recall. It all blends in. We had some conversations about racial slurs and hate speech here at an MSAC meeting.

[01:29:40] I want to give you an update of where we are as of today and just give some perspective and an infographic that can be used in support of how to approach the response to these things that are happening.

[01:29:57] So as of today, we have 518 total incidents made by 518 distinct students. This number changes and fluctuates throughout the year just because this data is about incidents, not by numbers of students.

[01:30:14] So I want to just make sure that I clarify that. 81 at the high school level, 158 at the elementary school level, and 279 at the middle school level. Kind of broke it down by racial demographic. And just I want to be clear that when we look at the number of incidents, the numbers in the parentheses are the unique numbers of students within that subgroup that make up the 518 total incidents.

[01:30:46] So to give you an example, you could have one incident made up by four students that are in a different subgroup. Although that count goes for that particular subgroup, it's one incident.

[01:31:02] So that's why the numbers fluctuate. One of the things that we are looking at, and we're going to need to take some more time for data analysis, is last year, the way that we recorded the incidents, we were able to really kind of look at the categories.

[01:31:20] What types of racial slurs or hate speech is occurring? Right now, we would have to do a little bit more digging to make sure that we're able to calculate that. But we do know that in certain situations, we are looking at how do we provide more supports or interventions for repeat offenders.

[01:31:43] Consequences and education is what we're really focusing on in working with the schools so that they make sure that students are held accountable. And then the communication to our parents and to the community in terms of how we denounce these incidents is very, very important.

[01:32:02] So I'll stop there. There might be some questions specifically about this data. In the parentheses, the ones in the parentheses, are those the incidents that it occurred to or it occurred from?

[01:32:19] I'm assuming it occurred to. Like, for example, American Indian, you have four, but then you have three in the parentheses. Right. So there are four incidents made up from American Indian by American Indian students. Okay. And there are three distinct students, three distinct incidents by that subgroup.

[01:32:43] Okay. So it's not always going to parallel one-to-one, if that makes sense. It makes sense. Thank you. I hope I'm explaining that correctly, yes. So to my knowledge, there are microaggressions and undertones that are captured within this data, but I couldn't specifically tell you how much.

[01:33:20] Typically, an incident is very blatant. A student or students said this, did this, wrote this, vandalized this. That is a slur or hate speech. So there could be, within the data, some of the microaggressions and the nuances, but most of it is specifically, as it's being reported or it was heard, that this is what was said or done to a specific student or group of students.

[01:33:54] It can also be a situation where it is something I said that's not directly towards one particular student, but students were obviously hurt and offended by what they heard.

[01:34:10] So it does have some nuance and complexity within when these incidents occur. The numbers that are of the students, is that reflecting both offenders and those affected, or is it just the...

[01:34:29] Just the offenders. Okay. In the counts of the incidents, the targets or the students that this was happening to are not included in this. Okay. It's just the offenders. But I do remember you telling us in a previous meeting that you do have check-ins with those folks affected.

[01:34:48] Like that is part of the... Oh, yeah. Okay. So you track that elsewhere. That can be tracked in a various amount of ways. It's not something that we house. Okay. Remember, and also this is coming from our student information systems database, Phoenix.

[01:35:04] So there are a lot of different ways that schools are handling how the supports are in place with our UMHT, ongoing counseling, ongoing discussions, restorative practices, those types of things. But that without going into the specific incident, discipline incident, you might you wouldn't be able to see that.

[01:35:26] yes um so is there a way to see the breakdown per school and also how would we follow up to ensure that our schools are reporting the incidents that occur there yeah and i think that that is a huge issue because we're continuously hearing about the variability from school to school the response how and one of the things i would say is that um it is very important that we continue

[01:35:59] to work with the schools and within the school division to hold the school and LCPS accountable for what's happening, and there's a lot of variability that we are aware of, but the first step is to make sure that that conversation is happening with school administration.

[01:36:20] There are a lot of different things that I would say have to be in place, and a lot of times when those relationships aren't in place sometimes it's it's easier to feel slighted or not get the actual response that you're looking for but that should not deter any any any parent whatsoever um so i i would say that that is a very important step and to if if necessary you

[01:36:47] have to get other people involved that's a very good question i would say um i would not say that

[01:37:25] that is a pervasive practice currently i think that a lot of times sometimes there are things that happen and there's an assumption that our office is aware of it. Sometimes we're finding out the situation at the same time everyone else is finding out. Okay, sure, sure.

[01:38:00] Yeah, thank you for that. I think that that's a wonderful idea. I think that's something we can do a better job at as we are hearing and finding out about certain things throughout the entire nation, making sure that we're doing that communication. And then also the availability of the communication within the different offices and departments within our school division that type of communication we are

[01:38:37] looking to improve sure our ongoing support and consultation is it doesn't end it doesn't stop

[01:39:24] we we respond to emails phone calls on a daily basis there are some schools that reach out specifically when they need supports and they let us know this is what we're doing this is what we are planning, what are your thoughts, we become very much thought partners with the schools in terms of their responses and then the supports put in place for students, but that doesn't happen all the time, and so a lot of times it is a reactive measure, not a proactive measure.

[01:39:53] Now, I will say that a lot of our schools are really working towards that proactiveness in addressing this issue within different initiatives, school culture building aspects, and their communication with their community.

[01:40:10] So I want to go back to this. There is variability in all of this, and that's why we're working so hard to actually provide capacity building, professional development, and also our collaboration with schools on an ongoing basis so that we can become more proactive and less reactive.

[01:40:29] So I think from the last time, it sounded like these incidents were increasing. Is that correct? At that time, in terms of just looking at projections, they were right on par with where we were last year.

[01:40:53] And since it's like a no tolerance, what happens to the repeat offenders that continue to engage in racial slurs and hate speech? That's a school-by-school situation.

[01:41:09] I can't really speak to the types of consequences. I know that we do have the scope of from detentions, verbal warnings, all the way up to suspension. So it really all depends on what is going on specifically with that particular student and the work that's being put in place for consequences in educating that child or young adult.

[01:41:39] Thank you. I was just wondering, this data I'm assuming is only reflecting students, am I correct? Incidents. In students. I was just curious if there could be data that would reflect on educators or adults being factored in for incidents of such similar factors.

[01:42:02] In what way? Can you help me? Like, for example, whatever, whatever, like racial slurs or anything, or if there was anything, any type of data that could show on behalf of educators or any incidents is hopefully not with the adults that that are present in the schools or on school grounds that you can find out about.

[01:42:23] Okay, yeah, and I think that would be another aspect of some deeper analysis that I definitely agree with you, would be supportive in terms of finding out from schools. So we do have some firsthand knowledge of what some schools are doing.

[01:42:41] I've worked with some principals in the room, and just knowing what they're doing, that is some data or knowledge that we can impart. But also we would need to do some digging and some compiling that's separate from this database.

[01:42:59] But that's a very good point. Can you share any strategies that other schools have used and found to be effective as far as addressing these incidents? Yeah, they are using restorative practices.

[01:43:16] They are doing town hall meetings. They are bringing in outside speakers. They are looking at becoming no place for hate designated schools. They are consistently messaging on a weekly, daily basis about what the expectations are for students.

[01:43:37] And they utilize other times, maybe it might be advisory or other opportunities to really speak on what harm happens when these racial slurs and hate speech occur. and why we can't tolerate it and why that's not indicative of the core values and expectations for the school and the school community.

[01:44:02] And I would say the biggest piece is the consistency. It's all the time. It's not just when there is an increase or uptick. It is becoming part of the motto and the lived expectations that not only the students and staff have, but the community has.

[01:44:23] And I think I might have said this before, this is not an overnight fix. This takes, you know, and if students can learn how to do these things, they can unlearn them. But it takes time. I'm sorry, I took a lot of time with this section.

[01:44:44] Oh, student voice. No, I think we're doing this together. So part of this also is our ability and the importance of collecting student voice. And so I will say that working with our student equity ambassadors, Our student equity ambassadors at the secondary level are incredible students.

[01:45:05] We had an in-person meeting here. We have meetings almost monthly. And a part of this is really getting their voice and helping them to understand their power in advocacy and creating action within their schools.

[01:45:20] A lot of the work that they're doing is around racial slurs and hate speech. And so we're looking to make sure that we continue this work with not only our student equity ambassadors, but also the MSAC student delegates. So we'll be having multiple, multiple opportunities to collect voice, to have conversations and discussions about how they can be change agents in their schools and really be advocates for moving some of the issues that they're experiencing in schools and bringing that information to not only our superintendent,

[01:45:53] because he has taken a huge emphasis on addressing and hearing these things, but also to the school principals and the staff at schools. So as he was saying, so when Dr. Spence found out that we had this group that was already ready, he was like, that's great, I want to talk to them.

[01:46:20] So this is just a representation of what we're working on right now. So back in the fall, Dr. Spence met with a group of our high school student equity ambassador, and they focused on a few things. They focused on school safety and student wellness, what it means to have academic excellence, what that looks like for them, and then also what a welcoming, inclusive, and affirming school environment means for them.

[01:46:46] So we've had to reschedule a couple of times because of the snow, but we're going to be meeting with the students again, that same group. And really, like Shee was saying, we're focusing in on the student advocacy and action piece, And so we're asking them, what can you do or what are you doing at your schools to help sustain or strengthen that welcoming, inclusive, and affirming environment?

[01:47:09] So when we had our student equity ambassador meeting here, they got a chance to really put some thinking around that. And so hopefully we'll be able to share out some of those things that they're working on and kind of uplift what they're doing, because it's pretty amazing the things that we have heard already.

[01:47:26] And then we continue to support them. And so as we hear from them what they're doing, they can share with us, hey, it would be really great if we could get support with this. And sometimes that might be something simple like poster board or something so they can do like we have one school that's doing a poster campaign and it's really awesome.

[01:47:43] Or it might be just like, hey, I need to get some help thinking about this. It is a pleasure for all of us to be able to work with these students and see the incredible impact that they can have. These kids deeply care about what they're doing. and I know that we have a couple of students here who are also student equity ambassadors and we just like we just cannot overstate how important you are so I we do want to share this as well so one of the things that we're able to do as a result of our we have we have

[01:48:18] meetings with the equity ambassadors throughout the year and that's a place where they can share with us what is happening at their schools and so I want to give you a moment to just read some of

[01:48:28] these quotes every time I do this I am I feel the things I feel all the things when I see this it's clear how much this sits on them and so I know we don't have a lot of time here but I do

[01:49:05] want to give you a moment to just you know share with one another at your tables you know after reading these quotes what comes to mind maybe think about like as in our work as MSAC delegates

[01:49:17] you know what can we be doing to help support kids at this time so in the interest of time we

[01:50:01] can hear from maybe one table and then we need to move on to our next piece but you can keep these conversations going afterwards. I will let Cynthia take over.

[01:50:18] Good evening everyone. So we're just kind of kind of switch gears here a little bit and talk about our work with schools and as our division has kind of shifted and refocused our work a lot of that attention has really gone into work with schools and I just wanted to share with you an overview of something that we had a big roll-in, which was our countywide PD day in November. So this is where we had the opportunity to create learning for all LCPS staff, and we just have about nine more minutes, so I'm

[01:50:57] going to go pretty quickly here. The focus of that learning that happened at every school building in LCPS was around pathways to access, opportunity, and knowledge. So we really wanted to give this as a lens for our teachers, as a way for them to create equitable instruction in their classrooms.

[01:51:18] So we focused on access, making sure that students are able to really connect to the work that they're learning about, whether that's through strong relationships, whether that's through connecting curriculum to students' cultures, their backgrounds, their experiences, their interests, and as well as providing the scaffolding and the support that all students need as we aim in Loudoun County to really have rigor in every classroom that's appropriate for every student, each and every student.

[01:51:47] We talked about opportunities as the frequency with which teachers are really providing kids with deeper learning opportunities. So it's not something that is a special project at the end of the quarter or something that happens if students finish early, but that it becomes something that's implemented as a part of daily instruction for teachers.

[01:52:07] And finally, we talked about knowledge and how knowledge is empowering to students. Not only the content knowledge, but their knowledge of themselves, what their assets are, what their strengths are as learners, and that really helps them to reach their full potential as students.

[01:52:24] A lot of the collaboration with schools happened because we had a special focus this year on the schools really making this staff-wide presentation their own. So we really encouraged and gave time to a facilitation team of three staff members from the special education department, from our equity leads and our EL learners as well, our English language learners as well.

[01:52:51] So there were three teachers that were presenting this to the staff and they made the presentation their own based on their school improvement goals, any initiatives that they have, professional learning goals or instructional goals that they had in their school. So this happened in November and this learning continues to move on because when we took feedback from teachers, more than 87% of teachers really took advantage of the opportunities that were included in the learning,

including strategies that teachers could use the very next day, opportunities for teachers to work and collaborate in small groups around the

[01:53:28] topics that we presented as well as opportunities for staff to talk as a staff around what they're seeing in terms of any barriers to access opportunities and knowledge for students so now we're going to bring up this height field to talk about what some of that collaboration in schools has looked like from this november 7th offering cool collaboration is always last in our slide deck and it is one of the most celebratory things so it should be one of the the last things and I have just a few minutes to tell you all about it. So we were really

[01:54:07] intentional as a team at the very beginning of the year to define what collaboration was going to look like with schools. Sometimes even good intentioned administrators will reach out and ask us for support in something that is happening within their school and sometimes the ask is more of can you come and fix this? Can you come and teach teachers how to do, you know, to not do microaggressions?

[01:54:30] Can you come and work with our students and take on this problem? Or can you look at what we've done and tell us that it's good? And then we can go have the sign-off that Equity said that this is okay.

[01:54:47] So we were really intentional about the idea of full collaboration, and we presented to all of the principal groups. With this document about the collaborative opportunities that we provide and the way in which we provide thought partnership, we can certainly provide resources and collaborate and bring our expertise and knowledge along and support the work.

[01:55:10] And it's not something that we would own, it would be a joint ownership. The focus of the start of the year was really at the first component of the culturally responsive framework, the welcoming, inclusive, affirming environment as a really great entry point knowing that culture really undergirds all of this and climate. So one of the presentations that we shared with them that's something that we can support them in creating was this one on culture meaning, so the definition and myths of culture. So we shared this with all principals and after

[01:55:45] that they would reach out to us. A few schools really reached out for infusing this type of learning into their professional learning plans or to support their student groups and creating more voice for students. So there's a few different places where this has really grown.

[01:56:02] One thing that I always point out on this slide deck is our culture mess. I'll move this big cursor out of the way. And it's the idea that there's a bunch of them on here. A couple I always point out is that culture the myth that culture is equivalent to race and ethnicity when people think of culture that's typically what they think of right away and culture is so much more it's multifaceted as we know another thing that is still a myth that may be out there for teachers as well is that the goal is then to learn about each and every culture that's out there and they get overwhelmed how am I supposed to do that and it's really starting with the students who are

[01:56:40] with you the students in your class who you're serving who you're overseeing so this slide deck eventually was sent out, oh, I can leave that up if you like, was sent out to every school, every equity lead, shared it, not just the slide deck, but in a synchronous presentation to all the staff in LCPS. So after that, there's been about a monthly slide deck shared, one on trusted adults and one on empathy. So that's a practice that will be continuing. It started this year it was definitely an adjustment especially with schools who have their plans in

[01:57:18] place and we know that there's a lot of variability and we're trying to level set so that is a practice that will be continued into next year and hopefully that communication will be smooth now that the system is already in place. I'll share quickly I think we're gonna make it that we have visited or we'll be visiting every single school. I think there's 98 this year as a team of eight to every single school over the course of the year so that we can have that specifically focused touch point

[01:57:55] so that we can provide listening. They can answer questions. We can check in really on how are things going. And here are some of the schools, some of the many schools that we've been collaborating with over the course of the year and that really wraps up our time so uh we appreciate the opportunity to present for you today and we look forward to coming back and maybe going deeper into some other content and items that we've discussed today thank you for the time and turn it back over

[01:58:30] to you well we went all the way till nine o'clock so thank you all for coming eight o'clock what you know, I don't even know what day it is at this point in the week. So I almost dropped my elementary school student off at middle school and took my high school student to elementary school. So it is a week. But we made it to eight. Thank you for coming to our earlier time. I hope this works for you. I feel like it's a good sweet spot for us to rest in for a while. But I hope you found this

[01:59:09] meeting informative. I know it was a lot of information, but we really felt like you all hearing from DEIA about their focuses, what work they're doing within the division, and just getting to know the entire team a little bit better was gonna be beneficial.

[01:59:25] So again, we are so excited to have you all here. I've said it, I'm not ashamed to say it, I'm very biased. I've seen this team at work, I have gone on a school visit with them, and they are phenomenal. They are, as we would say to date myself, they are about that life. But they do the work, and they are here for us, and they're here for our students, and I'm so happy to have them.

[01:59:46] But our next meeting will be in March. We will see you next month at 6:00 p.m. Please drive safe on your way home. Again, thank you for coming, and have a good night.



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